

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

NOAA MARINE SCIENCES LAB

SANDY HOOK, NEW JERSEY

MAY 12 - 13, 1999

MEETING SUMMARY

The NY/NJ Regional Response Team (RRT) held its semi-annual meeting on May 12 - 13, 1999 at the NOAA Marine Sciences Laboratory, located at Fort Hancock, Sandy Hook, New Jersey. The meeting was co-chaired by CAPT Thomas Daley (USCG 1st District) and Mr. Doug Kodama (EPA Region II alternate co-chair).

Mr. Kodama commented that the meeting was held at this facility to give RRT members and participants the opportunity to see a different area of the region, and to get closer to the sensitive resources along the shoreline that the RRT is striving to protect. Mr. Frank Csulak of NOAA's Natural Resource Damage Assessment Center welcomed the RRT to Sandy Hook, provided an overview of the facility, and described some of the features of the NOAA labs that the RRT would be touring the following day.

USCG OSC Reports

Activities New York - LCDR Stagliano briefed the RRT on *M/V CAMPO DURAN*, an Argentine small coastal tank ship making its first US port call. On December 18, 1998, Activities Baltimore conducted a Tank Vessel Exam. Due to the vessel's condition, it remained in Baltimore for roughly one month to ensure full compliance with inspection regulations. After coordinating with MSO Philadelphia & ACTNY, the vessel departed Baltimore on January 12, 1999, was escorted by two tugs up the Delaware River per MSO Philadelphia COTP Order, then arrived in New York two days later. At this point, ACTNY conducted an initial vessel inspection to ensure the vessel remained in compliance with regulations. Some of the areas of concern associated with this vessel were:

1. Vessel arrived in New York with up to 12 inches of oil in the bilge, even after extended repairs in Baltimore.
2. The decks were covered with oily residue and cluttered with bagged garbage and over 85 drums containing new and used lube oil.
3. Slop tanks were filled with raw sewage, oil, molasses, and waste water.
4. Firefighting piping system failed the exam.

5. Concern whether the vessel could meet financial responsibility for three pollution incidents in Lower New York Bay.
6. Transiting Hudson River during ice season and limited booming strategies (ultimate destination Albany).
7. Limited response resources in Albany.
8. Contents of vessel were an unregulated cargo.
9. Law Enforcement suspicions were raised because of pressure to allow the cargo to move
 1. Questions about Financial ability to make repairs.
10. Connection with oil spills in Philadelphia/Baltimore zones.

Lessons Learned:

1. Continue close coordination between COTP zones.
 1. Periodically change out marine inspectors to limit "tunnel" vision.
 2. Know coordinating agencies' concerns and response limitations
2. NYSDEC (transit/response in Albany)
 1. FDA (cargo concerns)
 2. Not all agencies operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 3. Ask questions prior to executing on suspicions (LE).
 4. Reminder that unregulated cargo vessels pose significant threats/problems.
 5. Confirm Marine Safety Lab results on "spills".

LCDR Stagliano also announced future events at ACTNY:

1. June 1 Area Committee Meeting at FT Wadsworth, 1300-1600
2. Sep/Oct Hazardous Material Tabletop Exercise to test ACP Annex N
 1. Oct 6-7 ICS-300 training, FT Wadsworth

MSO Long Island Sound - LT McElligatt reviewed the lessons learned from the September 1998 PREP exercise. He said that things are moving forward with the LIS dispersant matrix. He reported on the March 1999 grounding of a fishing vessel on Napatree Beach, RI that involved three states. Instead of removing the vessel's fuel, the vessel was refloated by dumping 50,000 pounds of fish cargo overboard to lighten the vessel. The State of Rhode Island granted approval for this in about 30 minutes.

MSO LIS usually finds about 10 to 15 abandoned drums per year on Long Island's south shore. A recent response showed the value of all of the training and proper response procedures, because the drum was found to contain nitric acid, and improper handling could have resulted in serious injury to the responders.

There will be a LIS Area Committee meeting on 14 July, and CAPT Mitchell will be relieved in a Change of Command Ceremony on 23 July.

COTP Philadelphia - CAPT Adams reported on a continued downward trend in the number of spills, from 360 in 1997 to 151 in 1998, to 53 so far in 1999. He attributed the reduction to outreach and to help from state partners. Transfer operators and the public were targeted for outreach.

M/V Spring Bee lost 5400 gallons of lube oil during an undocking maneuver.

MSO Philly ran a 3-week surge operation where they focused on bunkering operations. They spoke with operators on improving procedures. This helped MSO get a better picture of the risk in the port.

He foresaw increasing Port State Control efforts to address the risk from abandoned vessels, due to the Asian economy driving many substandard vessels to make their first US port call in years.

MSO Buffalo - LCDR Potter reported on the Sunny Blossom grounding, which required lightering 3500 M.T. of caustic soda, and on a 1,000 gallon spill of thermal heating fluid from Reynolds Aluminum in Massena, NY. Mobil Oil is sponsoring a PREP exercise 22-23 September.

CAPT Daley announced the new Regulated Navigation Area recently passed by the First Coast Guard District. It requires an escort for single-skin barges being towed by single-screw tugs within certain areas. The D1 POC is LT Rich Klein, 617.223-8243.

EPA's Core Emergency Response Program - Steve Touw briefed the RRT on the status of EPA's Core Emergency Response Program implementation. He briefly discussed the 10 core elements, which are intended to improve EPA's emergency response program nationwide. Some of the elements that were highlighted included: regional response centers, personal protective capabilities, response readiness, response equipment, and training and exercises. The RRT will be briefed on the status of the Core ER program at future meetings, as appropriate. Mr. Kodama commented that EPA Region 2 has become more aggressive in its response program. He added, however, that the Response and Prevention Branch, which houses the emergency response program, handles many program responsibilities, including removal actions, so it is difficult to dedicate personnel solely to emergency response.

EPA's Area Planning - Mr. Kodama updated the RRT on EPA's area planning efforts, which is focusing on New York State. EPA is pulling together existing plans, pulling out critical elements of those plans, and identifying critical contacts. The region is also utilizing GIS to compile information and identify sensitive areas. Mr. Quinn commented that there should be layering between local, county, state and federal plans, to reflect the cascade of resources as the state and EPA come into play as reinforcements, not replacements.

NY National Guard RAID Team - LTC Bill Vorlicek of the NY National Guard (NYNG) briefed the RRT on the Guard's Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection (RAID) Team, which was formed to support the response to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents. The name of the team has subsequently been changed to Military Support Detachment. A 1997 study concluded that each state and territory should establish a WMD team, and also that 10 large teams should be established - one in each federal region. The NYNG developed a 5-year integration concept for WMD response. At the time of the RRT meeting, their team had hired 20 of its 22 members, and equipment was scheduled to be delivered between July and September. Team members are undergoing training at state fire academies to achieve certification. LTC Vorlicek stated that the team understands ICS and several members have received ICS training. He commented that the team won't change its military structure, but understands where they fit within ICS.

A lively discussion followed, covering such issues as response times for the team, OSHA training requirements, and crossing state boundaries for response. This discussion segued into a discussion of efforts at the NRT level addressing counter-terrorism and WMD.

Y2K - Mr. Touw reviewed a NRT PowerPoint presentation highlighting Y2K issues and efforts undertaken by numerous federal agencies. Mr. Scott Lundgren (USCG-D1) also discussed USCG's efforts to prepare for the Y2K date change. NYSDEC, NJDEP and MSO Philadelphia then gave brief updates on their preparedness efforts for Y2K.

The meeting adjourned at 1630, and reconvened at 0900 on Thursday, 13 May.

NJ Inlets Protective Booming Strategy - Mr. Stan Delikat discussed NJ DEP's protective booming strategy initiative. He gave a short history of the project, starting with the M/V ANITRA incident in 1996. As a result of convincing the governor that response capability needed to be increased, DEP now receives an extra \$50,000 per year to devise and test booming strategies. Testing a "Christmas tree" boom configuration outside Barnegat Inlet showed that it was ineffective. Using the lessons learned from that test, which received positive media coverage due to its bold initiative, on 14 Oct DEP will be testing an "inside" strategy, with 2 diagonals, at the Shark River Inlet. Rice hulls will be used to simulate oil. Mr. Delikat has talked to all shore communities, and several of the

mayors. The reception has been generally positive. NJ DEP is trying to export the "adopt an inlet" program, where an industry player sponsors an inlet on the mid-Delaware River.

New York Reports - Mr. Tom Quinn discussed an initiative to respond to a multimedia incident, integrating different state programs and formalizing plans. He commented on the need to rethink Weapons of Mass Destruction. Priority strategies in the new plan are removal, recovery, retreat/demobilization/when to stop strategy, and restoration. There is a need to get the Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team concept into Area Plans. Mr. Quinn commented that there has been a resurgence and strengthening in the co-ops on the Hudson River.

M/V New Carissa - Scott Lundgren led a review of the *M/V New Carissa* Incident. CAPT Gary Van Den Berg from NOAA updated the RRT on the Special Monitoring of Advanced Response Technologies (SMART) protocol. He announced a one-page description, which is available with the full protocol on the RRT II web page listed below. The Tier 3 protocol, with some editorial changes, is expected within 2 to 3 months. Mr. Ed Levine, the NOAA SSC, discussed how SMART worked during the *New Carissa* response. It was not used exactly as planned, but it is a flexible system, and it worked well as implemented. SMART provides a quick feed of information back to the UC. The different organizations showed good cooperation, and having a plan in hand impressed the local government officials. Mr. Levine facilitated a very productive discussion on how an incident like the *New Carissa* would be handled if it went aground in Region II.

It was asked whether the Navy would be able to do missions similar to what the West Coast units were tasked with. Both NJ and NY have agreements in place with Navy EOD for disposal of explosives. NJ has an MOU that facilitates NJ calling on the Navy to perform explosions. NJ and NY noted that they don't believe that there exists a place in NY or NJ to burn a grounded ship, since the resources, access, location, and population of Region II are much different from Oregon.

Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research - Ms. Eileen Muller from Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research spoke to the RRT, addressing the legal and political reasons for doing wildlife rehabilitation. She presented what an operation can look like, discussed strategies, and spoke about the considerations that go into setting up a bird rescue response, including logistics, facility requirements, and volunteers.

During the lunch break, NOAA offered a tour of their Marine Sciences Laboratory.

When the meeting reconvened, LTJG Hemp noted that the USCG has formally proposed response plan regulations under OPA 90 for vessels that carry hazardous substances in bulk, expanding the definition of hazardous substances to include any mixtures and

solutions that contain 10% or more hazardous substances by weight, harmonizing it with MARPOL Annex II. The Notice of Proposed Rule Making appeared in the Federal Register on 22 March 99.

Response Technologies Committee Activities - Mr. Levine reported that there are now three tiers of SMART for dispersants. It is not a mandated system; it is a system that provides a foundation with options.

Upon recommendation of the committee, and noting that the water depth at 1 NM offshore of NY and NJ is generally greater than 30 feet, the RRT unanimously agreed to work on moving the pre-authorized area for FOSCs to use dispersants (the line that is currently at 3 NM) into one NM off the shores of NY and NJ. Mr. Levine will draft a revised MOU for signature.

Mr. Levine also invited the RRT to see the GNOME system at <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/oilaid.html>.

OHMSETT: Capabilities & Recent Activities - OHMSETT staff presented an overview of the capabilities, recent events, and future plans for the facility. A field trip to the OHMSETT facility was held immediately following the RRT meeting. The Minerals Management Service facility has a variety of training available. A handout described their capabilities. They are considering testing the feasibility of testing dispersants. The facility is available to government and non-government entities. The costs are approximately \$900 per student for a 5-day class.

CAPT Daley presented the Meritorious Public Service Award to Mr. Delikat in celebration of his accomplishments over ten years with the RRT and the NY and NJ Area Committee. CAPT Daley also read a Flag Letter from the Commander, First Coast Guard District, Rear Admiral Larrabee.

The RRT heard the following ***Agency Reports & Comments***:

Sheila Thomas, the FEMA Region II Regional Exercise officer, invited USCG participation on the Regional Interagency Steering Committee, in support of the Federal Response Plan.

Darryl Robinson from DOI reported a reorganization in the Boston office, wherein he is now the Regional Environmental Assistant for Emergency Response.

Gary Ott, NOAA SSC for Region III, announced that the Region III RRT was in the midst of putting together an RCP that would be more useful and user-friendly. While keeping the required NCP format, it is organized with four sections: Admin, Policy, Strategic Thinking, and a "yellow pages" section of who/where, info support, and resources for OSCs.

Next meeting: It was agreed that the RRT would hold its next meeting as a joint meeting with RRT I, in New England. Updates will be sent by email and posted on the RRT II web page: <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/staff/m/rrt/rrt2.html>